

Telemedicine FAQ

What is telemedicine?

Telemedicine is a subcategory of telehealth that involves the use of a tool to exchange medical information electronically from one site to another to improve a patient's clinical health status. At Maywood Vet, our tool is an app to video chat, text message, share videos, pictures, and educational tools.

Is the telemedicine visit performed by my veterinarian or a third party?

At Maywood Vet, our staff veterinarians perform telemedicine visits. This means that the virtual doctor has access to and is familiar with your pet's medical history. The details of each virtual visit are also documented in your pet's record to ensure continuity of care.

What types of issues can telemedicine address?

Many common veterinary complaints can be addressed via telemedicine. Chronic recurrent issues, such as skin and behavior problems can often be addressed through telemedicine. Minor concerns, such as a recent onset of mild limping or a recent onset of mild diarrhea, are also good candidates for telemedicine. These common conditions can be treated symptomatically using telemedicine.

Telemedicine can also be used for follow-up care or monitoring on existing patients. Post-surgical rechecks and scheduled follow-up visits for pets with chronic medical concerns can typically be conducted through telemedicine.

Telemedicine can also be used for prescription refills for current patients and for palliative care.

Finally, a virtual visit can be used to provide triage. If you are unsure if your pet needs to see an emergency veterinarian or if the condition can safely wait, a telemedicine visit can provide you with peace of mind.

Telemedicine visits are not appropriate for every concern i.e a pet that is hit by a car, cannot breathe, or has a large, bleeding wound

How can a veterinarian diagnose my pet's problem without a physical in-person examination?

During an in-person veterinary visit, your veterinarian gathers information about your pet via the medical history and the physical examination.

The medical history is easily obtained in a telemedicine visit, just as it would be during an in-person visit. Your veterinarian will ask questions to understand what you are seeing at home.

These details about your pet's history can significantly narrow down the list of possible diagnoses. In many cases, the medical history is just as important as the physical examination.

The physical examination is more limited in a telemedicine appointment, compared to an in-person visit. Your veterinarian may ask for images or videos of areas of concern.

While it is impossible to perform a complete, comprehensive examination during a telemedicine appointment, in many cases your veterinarian can gather enough information to arrive at a reasonable

diagnosis and start treatment. Your veterinarian can recommend things that you can do for your pet at home, or they can prescribe medications to treat your pet's condition.

What if my pet's problem cannot be treated via telemedicine?

Based on a telemedicine appointment, your veterinarian may determine that your pet requires in-person care. Just as with an in-person visit, diagnostic tests may be required to determine the cause of your pet's problem. Preliminary advice can still be given via telemedicine, but your veterinarian may schedule you an in-person visit for bloodwork, radiographs, ultrasound, or other diagnostic tests.

Your veterinarian can help you determine when and where your pet should be seen and give you an idea of what to expect during the in-person visit.

In what other circumstances is telemedicine beneficial?

Telemedicine is particularly useful in situations where pet owners cannot physically bring their pet to a veterinary hospital. This can be in the case of an extremely fearful or anxious pet, a disabled pet owner, scheduling conflicts, transportation issues, and more.